



RESTRICTION AND PREVENTION
OF
DIPHTHERIA.
ISSUED BY THE
CONNECTICUT
STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

Please read carefully, and Preserve for
future reference.

HARTFORD:
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GENERAL RULES AGAINST INFECTION.

PURE AIR, Pure Water, Proper Food, and Clothing, are essential conditions of health. *Cleanliness, dryness, and ventilation*, in and around dwellings and places of public resort, are the surest safeguards.

No house refuse, filth, excremental matter, or foul dirt should be allowed to remain about inhabited dwellings.

Filthy, foul, and *damp* places, saturated with sink or slop water, and shaded by vegetation or otherwise, near dwellings or places of public resort, should be purified, cleansed, and dried, and as free access of air and sunlight provided as possible. They foster, nourish, and render more fatal, if they do not produce, pestilential diseases.

Your own privy, cesspool, or sink drain should be at least a hundred feet from the well; the privy disinfected, so as not to render the air offensive, the cesspool open at the top, so as to ventilate it into the open air, and not into your kitchen by an untrapped drain pipe. Be sure that your sink drain, house drains, or privy vaults do not by faulty construction or leakage leach their contents into your well, and be sure that the surface water does not run directly into the well, carrying a solution of all the filth upon the top of the ground.

Disinfection should be thoroughly and persistently used at the appearance of a contagious disease. Disinfectants destroy contagion that would otherwise spread and multiply.

All sewer connections should be trapped and *ventilated*, and all house drains well looked after.

Nurses and attendants should spend some time each day in *pure air*, and take out-of-door exercise whenever possible, but at such times as to avoid contact with others.

DIPHTHERIA

IS an infectious and contagious disease, though not as contagious as scarlet fever or small pox, still requiring great precaution. Children are more liable than adults, and may convey it to one another, or it may be conveyed to them by adults. The time of attack after exposure is usually within eight days, but may be after a few hours.

The specific contagion of diphtheria, on which it depends for its spread, is developed by the disease during its progress, and infects a locality in proportion to the extent to which the characteristic products of the disease are formed. The infection clings to articles in the room where cases have occurred, causing a reappearance of the disease, and after a single case it often breaks out in many places, always within a restricted area, sometimes gathering strength in its passage. Hence the importance of thorough disinfection. Unsanitary conditions favor its spread and increase its malignancy.

It is contagious by the exhalations from the sick, contaminating the air of the sick room *in proportion to the severity of the case*, and the extent of the membrane as a rule; by direct contact with infected articles, *e. g.*, by the use of eating or drinking utensils, towels, handkerchiefs, etc., used about the sick.

It is conveyed by the diphtheritic membrane coming into contact with any mucous surface (*e. g.*, mouth or nose), through kissing, sneezing, or coughing. The poison usually enters the system through the throat and upper air passages.

All persons recovering from diphtheria are to be considered as dangerous; severe and fatal cases, and even epidemics, have been enkindled from cases that have almost entirely recovered, and had never been severe. No such person should be allowed to attend *school*, or any public assembly.

RULES FOR PREVENTION.

First. ISOLATE THE SICK in a well ventilated room, preferably the uppermost room in the house. Place the bed so as to be accessible on all sides. Allow no person to enter except the necessary attendants. *In malignant cases* allow no one to go from the house to school, or to any public assembly.

Second. In preparing the sick room remove all unnecessary articles of furniture. Carpets, curtains, and table covers, are especially liable to retain infection. After use the room should be cleansed and ventilated, and, in malignant cases, disinfected thoroughly.

Third. All bed and body clothing, towels and handkerchiefs used by the sick, as soon as removed, should be placed in vessels containing disinfecting fluids and never be washed with other household articles. All plates, cups, glasses, spoons, and the like, used by the sick, should be rinsed with some disinfectant and washed separately.

Fourth. Nurses and attendants should wear only washable garments, and use disinfected water for hands, unsparingly. Physicians and clergymen should be provided with disinfected water for their hands on leaving the sick room.

Fifth. All scraps of linen used in receiving discharges from the mouth or nose should be immediately burned. All receptacles for filth should be thoroughly disinfected.

Sixth. CHILDREN should not be allowed to attend the funerals of those dying from diphtheria. Disinfectants should be used freely in the room and about the body while it remains unburied.* The coffin should never be opened at funerals to expose the dead to the public.

* Burnett's Fluid (solution of chloride of zinc,) is the most efficient. In malignant cases from four to six inches of sawdust saturated with a solution of chloride of zinc should be placed in the bottom of the coffin, (which should be water-tight,) the coffin closed at once, and not again opened.

DISINFECTANTS.

The following disinfectants are recommended by the Board :

FOR DISINFECTING PRIVIES, ASH-PITS, CESSPOOLS, DRAINS,
AND OTHER OFFENSIVE PLACES :

Fifty pounds of copperas, (sulphate of iron, green vitriol) to a barrel of water.

This may be dissolved in a smaller quantity of hot water, and then diluted. It may be used freely and repeated as often as odors arise. It is cheap and efficient. About four gallons are required to disinfect an ordinary vault used by one family. A smaller quantity may then be poured in occasionally.

FOR SINK PIPES AND WATER CLOSETS :

One pound of nitrate of lead to a gallon of water. Use freely. May be placed in vessels used for discharges from kidneys and bowels.

FOR ARTICLES OF CLOTHING, ETC., USED ABOUT THE
PATIENT.

Sulphate of zinc, eight ounces, crude carbolic acid, one ounce, warm water, three gallons.

Throw all articles of body linen, sheets, etc., at once into this solution and boil in clear water. In malignant cases such articles should be boiled in this solution, diluted with an equal quantity of water, previous to boiling in soap and water. It can be used freely in the sick room. It does not stain. A towel may be wet with it and hung in the room. A sheet may be hung across the entrance hall or door and kept constantly wet with it. Nurses and attendants will find it well to occasionally wash their hands in this fluid.

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Bromo chloralum, diluted with eight to ten parts of water, can be used in the sick-room for wetting towels and sheets, as above described, and for washing the hands, when the odor of carbolic acid is offensive, as it is odorless.

TO DISINFECT AN ORDINARY ROOM.

1st. Tightly close the room; place in an open earthen dish four ounces of peroxide of manganese; pour on this one pound of strong muriatic acid. Be very careful not to breathe the fumes. Leave the room and close the door. This generates chlorine gas. Clocks and metallic articles are supposed to have been removed.

2d. Place live coals upon ashes in a metallic pan, and place on the coals sulphur in fragments or powder. For an ordinary room two to four ounces of sulphur should be thoroughly burned. The room should be tightly closed as in the other method. This is rather preferable, as the sulphur is as efficient and more easily managed. Considerable heat is produced.

The room, after being kept closed about six hours, should then be thoroughly aired for a day or two.

TO WASH FURNITURE AND FIXTURES OF AN INFECTED ROOM.

One pint Labarraque's Solution (chlorinated soda,) in five pints of water.

The foregoing is published by the State Board of Health with a view to lessening the number of cases and deaths from diphtheria, which has formed a rapidly increasing cause of death of late, causing, as reported, 589 deaths in 1877.

Any communications upon the subject, with relation to localities, may be addressed to

STATE BOARD OF HEALTH,
HARTFORD, CONN.

